

The new

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*Beneath the rule of men entirely great
The pen is mightier than the sword*



ROGUE TRADERS



Readers fortunate enough to watch the TV programme, 'Watchdog' earlier this week, were treated to an exposé detailing the mal practice of two of the leading supermarkets in the UK.

Asda were taken to task over the overcharging of its customers who took advantage of its Asda Home Delivery service. In some cases the bill charged to recipients came to several times the actual cost of the order.

Asda's representative on TV explained how this anomaly came about, and how now their staff were now retrained to spot any such errors in the future. Anne Robinson and her team accepted Asda's explanation for the oversight and the alarm it may have caused the said customers. Apparently Asda not only reimbursed the customers but so too provided them with gift vouchers.

The second UK supermarket taken to task on the TV programme was the acclaimed leader in retail meat sales for the whole of the country, Tesco.

Not unlike the practice being carried on at the supermarket that we have in Alness (Morrisons), Tesco were deliberately misleading its meat buying customers. Not perhaps with the exact same prepacked pieces of meat Morrisons pass off for something it is not, but close.

Tesco were labelling inferior cuts of beef as Topside, when in fact it came from the flank part of the animal, rather than its rump.

Anne Robinson and her team, along with Daisy the cow, and with the help of two leading meat experts, were very voluble and precise in their condemnation of Tesco's mislabelling practice and its deceit.

Tesco acknowledges that its labelling is in fact misleading, and apparently stated that they would in future change the label description, but that the price per kilo would remain the same. So despite that inferior cut taking almost twice as long to cook until tender, Tesco risks the wrath of some of its disappointed customers, who may not have the experience, nor the time it takes for 'longer cooking', for extra profit. Ed.

ALL UK SUPERMARKETS SHOULD BE MONITORED

Readers may recollect that quite some time ago I highlighted a very shabby practice, conducted by members of the butchery pre-packing department of Morrisons store at Alness. Then, the staff were labelling, about 90% flank of lamb and 10% breast, as “ 100% breast of lamb”. I made a complaint but not a lot was done to remedy this misrepresentation of and the **over priced** lamb cuts.

Morrisons brag about how all their fresh meat is produced and killed in Scotland, well is it not time, that the supermarket giant acknowledged that we (the Scots) tend to like our traditional cuts of beef, mutton and pork, and stop foisting alternative ‘bits and pieces’ at **inflated prices** on us, the buying public?

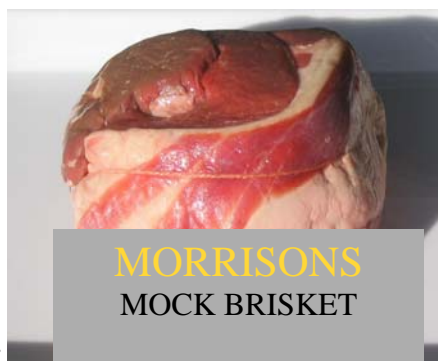
This particularly applies to one popular cut of beef, rolled brisket. For the uninitiated, on every beef carcass there is a limited amount of true brisket, not I hasten to add in the same category as fillet steak, but equally in short supply. Whereas the flank/shoulder of beef is much more plentiful but somewhat less appealing, and should be priced accordingly.

Morrisons freely acknowledge that it does mislabel at least one cut of meat in its butchery department. And offer all sorts of excuses, one being that the so called rolled Brisket, whilst being in reality ‘Thick Runner’.

Morrisons Alness Manager, Mr Hugh Urquhart, clearly does not appreciate my letters of concern, for quite recently I wrote to the man asking for clarification on the advertised ‘smoked fish’ that is for sale in the store.

For the moment I do not have sufficient space in this supplement for full details, but briefly I enquired as to whether or not some of the so called smoked fish were chemically treated. And if so could Mr Urquhart be so kind as to identify

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M r Urquhart chose to ignore my polite, and justified request so I ask myself is the manager and the board of Morrisons trying to hide something from the general public?

Morrisons Chairman, Sir Ian Gibson CBE has responded to your editor in the past claiming that his supermarkets had traded the mislabelled Thick Runner cut as Rolled Brisket for years without complaint.

But there again customers should be able not only to buy correctly labelled meat cuts but so too should the butchers behind the counters of the store be willing to provide truthful and helpful advice.

When Morag and I visited Morrisons store the day after the Watchdog programme there was not one piece of rolled brisket, mock or otherwise on the shelf.

Remember readers to double check purchases from all supermarkets henceforth. If you are not satisfied, **COMPLAIN** its your right.
Ed.

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